How Do We Educate Them?
Pineville, LA: A Case Study

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Background

- 80% of U.S. population live in cities
- Southeastern U.S. experiencing rapid population growth
  - Land is plentiful
  - Taxes and cost of living are low
  - Weather is temperate
- 33% increase in urban area growth from 1990-2000
- Increase predicted for next 50 years
Ultimate Outcome

- Avoid problems associated with urbanization before they are evident
  - Heat island effect
  - Stormwater run-off
  - Air pollution

- Educate citizens about benefits of natural resources in the urban environment
Objectives

- Develop U.F. surveying protocol
  - For educators, extension agents, non-profits
- Assess need for natural resource education
- Know what needs to be stressed and how to best get the message across
Population = 14,000
U.S. Census Bureau
Pineville Study Interests

- Understand what Pineville residents think about their urban forest
  - Are their natural resources highly regarded?

- Where do they get their information?

- How do they best learn and understand this information?

- What motivates them to action?

- What prevents them from getting info?
Methodology

- Telephone survey of Pineville residents
- N = 300 adults (18 years and older)
- Tree Board interests:
  - Thoughts about land development in city
  - Importance of urban forest in Pineville
  - Level of awareness of tree benefits
  - How to best market the information
- Interview conducted by MRI Research
Methodology

Demographics
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Education level
- Number of people in household
- Section of town they reside
- Length of time lived in Pineville
Methodology

Survey: 6 sections

- Sections 1-4
  - Importance/condition of city services
  - Rate level of land development in city
  - Role of tree preservation in land development
  - Importance/condition of landscaping in parking lots
  - Citizen’s knowledge of tree benefits
Methodology

Survey: 6 sections

- Section 5: Technology Transfer
  - Where do you find your information?
  - What is the best method for you to understand?
  - What motivates you to get information?
  - What prevents you from getting information?

- Section 6
  - Tree Board knowledge and projects
  - Volunteer interests
1. Which of the following sources of information about trees and tree care is most important to you?
   - Internet
   - Talking with family and friends
   - Local extension agent
   - Local workshops
   - Tree trimming company
   - Other (please specify)
Technology Transfer Questions

2. Which of the following items is the most preferred method for you to understand about trees and tree care?

- Written words (i.e. brochures, periodicals, etc)
- Video (i.e. cassettes, TV, DVD, etc)
- Hands-on exercises (i.e. workshops or volunteer activities)
- Combination of the three
- Other (please specify)
3. What is the primary motivational factor for you in obtaining information about trees and tree care?

- You desire a prettier space
- You have environmental concerns
- You want to lower utility bills
- Your neighbors are planting trees
- Other (please specify)
Technology Transfer Questions

4. What is the primary factor preventing you from gaining information about trees and tree care?
   – You are not interested in the subject
   – You do not have the time
   – You do not have the money
   – You do not know where to find the information
   – You have no way to get the information
   – Other (please specify)
Expected Results

- Based on Knoxville, TN survey and local knowledge
- City trees and tree maintenance is of less importance than other city services and land development
- Level of economic development tends toward not being enough
- Citizens would support regulating land development for tree conservation
Expected Results

- Trees and landscaping around city is generally important
- Trees mainly contribute to Pineville’s aesthetic beauty
- The internet and talking with friends is the main method of information gathering
- Prettier space motivates information needs
- No time and not knowing where to find information prevents information gathering
Questions and Discussion

- How do we improve this survey to get the information we need?
- What other questions need to be asked so we can better serve the urban public?
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